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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRE-APPLICATION PERIOD OPENS JUNE 1  
FOR NEBRASKA INTERNET ENHANCEMENT FUND GRANTS

LINCOLN – A pre-application period for communities wishing to obtain grants from the second offering of the Nebraska Internet Enhancement Fund (NIEF) opens June 1.

The Nebraska Public Service Commission announced that the fund would start the application process with a pre-application period to determine whether potential projects might be qualified for a grant to install or deliver broadband or other advanced telecommunications products throughout the state.

NIEF was established by the 2001 Nebraska Legislature to give priority to high cost factors such as population scarcity and remote geographical locations. A share of the proceeds from public entities that lease unused, dark fiber optics principally funds NIEF. The maximum amount available to successful grant applicants is \$50,000.

Forms for the pre-application period may be obtained online from the Commission's website at [www.psc.ne.state.us](http://www.psc.ne.state.us) or by contacting the Commission by telephone toll-free at 1-800-524-0017. Commission Attorney Nichole Underhill said pre-applications would be accepted through September 1 with the formal application period beginning September 15. Pre-applications are required before an invitation to submit a formal application is issued.

A timeline recommended by an advisory board and approved by the Commission calls for final awards for the new grant period to be made in January 2007.

Six grants were awarded in the initial NIEF offering to the City of Chappell, Box Butte County, Cheyenne County, Dawes County, and Nemaha County. The grants were used to finance projects ranging from construction and deployment of local high-speed broadband internet service networks to deploying wireless internet services to extend the range of high speed internet services to rural areas.

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